

TMOS Re-Spark Initiative

The ARC Centre of Excellence for Transformative Meta-Optical Systems (TMOS) is a collaborative research network spanning leading Australian universities. We are dedicated to advancing cutting-edge optical science while fostering an inclusive, supportive workplace. **Re-Spark** is our research career re-entry initiative designed to help STEM professionals with a PhD refresh their skills, rebuild confidence, and strengthen their CVs after a significant career interruption. Through short-term postdoctoral appointments and mentoring, the program provides a structured pathway back into academic research.

Purpose

The Centre recognises that career interruptions can affect an individual's ability to re-enter the workforce. This is particularly common among women who take time out for parental leave, but it can also impact culturally and linguistically diverse professionals who relocate internationally for work. An individual who has spent a portion of their career in industry also faces challenges in re-entering the academic workforce.

Objective

Our aim is to help STEM professionals with a PhD refresh their skills, build confidence, and strengthen their CVs to successfully re-enter the academic workforce

Scope

This initiative is available across all TMOS nodes (participating universities). Recruitment procedures may vary by university and will follow local policies.

Re-spark Eligibility

Candidates who apply must:

- Have had a notable career interruption within the last 12 months
- Have completed a PhD
- Be based in Australia i.e. be a domestic applicant
- Have full Australian work rights e.g. Permanent Resident, Citizen etc
- Be willing to undergo a Police check and working with children check
- Positions under this initiative require regular on-site presence; remote work is not available

Career interruptions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Caring Responsibilities:
 - Parental leave
 - Ongoing childcare responsibilities outside of parental leave
 - Caring for elderly parents, relatives, or family members with disability or illness.
- B. Health-related Interruptions:
 - Personal illness or injury requiring extended leave.

- Mental health-related breaks.
- C. Structural / External Barriers
 - Relocation due to a partner's career or family circumstances.
 - Re-entry into academia after time in industry